

134  
A  
LETTER  
TO A  
BENCHER  
OF THE  
INNER-TEMPLE,  
FROM A  
STUDENT of the same House.  
Writ in the Year 1713.

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*Discite, O MISERI, & Causas cognoscite Rerum,  
Quid Sumus, & quidnam Victuri gignimur, ordo  
Quis datus, aut meta quàm mollis flexus & unda :  
Quis modus argento, quid fas optare, quid asper  
Utile nummus habet : patria carisque propinquis  
Quantum elargiri deceat : QUEM Te DEUS esse  
Iussit, & humana qua parte locatus es in Re.  
Disce : nec invidias, quod multa fidelia putet  
In locuplete peru, defensis pinguibus UMBRIS,  
Et piper & perna MARSII monumenta clientis.*

PERS. Sat. 3.

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THE SECOND EDITION.

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ADVERTISEMENT  
BY THE  
BOOKSELLER.

**I** Think it proper to acquaint the World, on the publishing this private Letter, (if it be one) that it came to my hands in a Parcel of Books and Papers I purchased, belonging to a Gentleman lately deceased. Whether it was the Person's own Writing, or only communicated to him, I cannot say. I had the Curiosity to look it over, to see what it contained; and meeting with something in it I did not understand, I thought it might be of some Value. For which reason I communicated it to a grave Gentleman,

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tleman, whom, for my safety, I consult on such Occasions; who was pleas'd to return it with this Answer.

“ **THE** anonymous Letter you sent  
 “ me, I have read with a great deal of  
 “ pleasure. And though I cannot say I  
 “ approve of every thing in it; yet  
 “ such an Air of honest Sincerity runs  
 “ through the Whole, and the Good in it  
 “ so vastly transcends the Bad, that it is  
 “ my Opinion, you will not only run no  
 “ risk in giving it to the Publick, but  
 “ will, in some degree, deserve its thanks,  
 “ for doing it.”

**TO** conclude. Should it come out to be a real Letter, and writ by, or address'd to any one yet living, I hope that will not be thought my concern. I think my Purchase has given me a legal Interest in it, let who will have a natural one.

Dec. 10. 1728.

T. W.



S I R,

Octob. 24. 1713.

**T**HE impertinent Desire I have, that you should be acquainted with all my Thoughts, and all my Ways, has obliged me to put this *Paper* into your Hands. . . . I had prepared a serious Apology for it, but I tore it in pieces as soon as I had penn'd it. If when you have read it, it will not apologize for it self, I am sure all that I could say in excuse for my Freedom, would but have served to increase my Offence. If you have been pleas'd to

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observe the passionate Inclination, which, ever since I have had the Honour of being known to you, I have had, to recommend my self to your Esteem, it would not seem strange, That, after so long an absence, I should have more to say to you, than it would be possible for you to find time to *hear*; nor would it seem unnatural, that what I could not communicate to you by word of Mouth, I should take this round-about, tho', in Fact, the shortest way of *Letter*, to acquaint you with. You may perhaps find your Goodness towards me abus'd, in being troubled with my importunence; but you have this to comfort yourself withal, that mine is not the first Instance where so good a Cause has been accompanied with so ill an Effect; and that it is the ordinary misfortune of great humanity to have its Favours abused by the Objects of it. My abuse, however, SIR, of yours in this Case, is not so great, but my Veneration and Affection for you, are ten times greater. And tho' I may be liable, in general, to be censured for the freedom I have taken with you, in addressing you at all on this occasion, I am  
sure

sure I have taken the *propereſt time* to trouble you with it, and therein comply'd with HORACE'S Rule; Saturday Night in Term-time, being as proper an occaſion to communicate an Addreſs of this Nature, to YOU, SIR, as

*Si validus, ſi letus erit —*

was a Circumſtance to be attended to, in doing the ſame to AUGUSTUS.

SIR, I thought it became me, to take off ſomewhat of the Surprize of this Letter, by a ſhort *Introduction*, and to prepare you a little for what follows: Which having done, I ſhall leave my ſelf to your mercy, and hope you will indeed be *merciful* to ſo well-meaning a *Sinner*.

IT is now, SIR, ſome time ſince, when from *living by rote*, I firſt turn'd my Thoughts to the Conſideration of WHAT it was *to LIVE*, or *to have a BEING*. I had not attended to it long, before I diſcover-

ed it to be a *Reflection* of the *greatest Pleasure*, and what might be turn'd to the *greatest Importance*. And as I had a little before convinced my self of the Necessity of pursuing the *Enquiry* of the Nature of but *one Thing* at *once*, where the Matter was either difficult, or of great use to be perfect master of it, I from that moment being so possess'd with the Advantage of a Success in this, resolv'd to lay by the *Study* of the *Law*, 'till I had in some measure satisfied my self in it. But I had not apply'd my self long to the *Enquiry*, before I found it very necessary, in order to succeed at all in it, to revive the *Notions* of some Things which I formerly had considered, and to gain clearer *Notions* of others, of which I had yet but obscure *Conceptions*. I took occasion therefore in the last *Lent Vacation* to read over Mr. *Locke's* Book of *Humane Understanding*. This I thought a proper Book to furnish me with *Foundation Materials* for my future intended *Superstructure*. And in order to pursue my Design with less interruption, and to be more out of the way of the *Sollicitations* of the *Business* I was



engaged in, I withdrew my self out of the confusion and hurry of the Town, into a Retirement near it.

I found it very reasonable and necessary to begin with a *Survey*, and Consideration of my mental or *thinking Powers*, since it was by the help of these that I was informed that I *was*. This took me up *that*, and that small part of the following, *Vacation*, which past between the last *Sittings* of *Easter*, and the beginning of *Trinity Term*. The intermediate *Easter-Term* I spent in Town, both on account of refreshing my Mind, now wearied with a six Weeks unwonted Retirement, and of keeping up my *Acquaintance*, at least, with the *Profession* in which I was engaged; by attending as usual on the Courts of *Judicature*. *Trinity Term* being over, I withdrew as before into my *Solitude*, which was not more acceptable to me on account of the great Leisure I had to prosecute my *Design*, than on account of the particular suiting of my Genius, with Retirement and the Country. Where, however fatigued with application, I never want

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Company, to divert me, tho' alone, if in view of a fine Prospect. And considering how necessary it is to have some intermediate refreshment between repeated Applications of Mind, and being willing to have as little interruption as possible in my Meditations, I chose a Place to retire to, every way suited to my Inclination: By the means of which my solitary Abode became not only supportable, but highly acceptable to me.

I had, by this time, met with some Success in my *Enquiry*, and found my Mind began to open it self, and to aspire at larger Views and Comprehensions of Things than it had hitherto been wont to have. And I began to be of Opinion, "That an impartial and thorough *Enquiry*, into my *self*, under the following Heads of "What *I was?* How I came to *be?* and to "*what End* I was what I *am?*" (and without a particular Satisfaction on each of these Heads, I found it would be in vain for me to hope to be the better for my *Enquiry*) was not so easily, nor so soon to be brought to a Conclusion.

AS I was about to enter on the Consideration of the *first* of these, I found it would be a very unprofitable Application, to *consider*, "What I *was*," without the having a pretty good general Knowledge of "What there *was besides* me." And much less of the *second*, "How I came to *be*?" without looking a little into, and intending *Existence in general*. For without That, one would have but a very imperfect and inadequate Notion of the MAJESTY of any great *Fountain* and *Origin* of all things, nor any just Conception of the Inconsiderableness and Minuteness of *ourselves*, and what belongs to us; such a *Nothingness*, if compared with what is contain'd in infinite Space, or with what the ΤΟ ΠΑΝ is composed of.

I have no reason to boast of any Advantage I had in that part of the course of my Education, wherein I was engaged in the reading of *Philosophy*. Having been translated pretty early, at fourteen, from the Grammar-School, and a System of Philosophy put into my hands; the Inconsiderateness and Inadvertency of those Years,  
together



together with the Inability, and Disinclination of my Tutor to matters of Philosophy; he being one who would have been ten times better pleas'd to have discover'd in CICCERO the use of a *Latin* Word, in a Sense he never observ'd before, than to have been a CASSINI, or a HUYGENS, to have observ'd any new, or various *Phasis* of a *Planet*, or any new, *Satelles* attending any of those illustrious Orbs; I say, the Inattention and Inconsiderateness incident to that, and the three or four immediately succeeding Years, join'd to the being under the Care and Instruction of such a Tutor, who had no other Skill in Philosophy, but a few senseless Distinctions, which *Burgersdicius* and *Heerebord*, and other such famous and renowned Authors afforded him, might very well excuse a Pupil from the Expectation of making much Proficiency in Philosophy under him. I pass through, however, a Course of Philosophy, such as it was, and was as wise at the end of it, as before I entred on it. But I made one *Reflection* in this time of Darkness, which hath continued with me, and which I find to be well-grounded in the Dawn of the Understanding I enjoy  
at

at present. And That was, that the Disquisition after the *efficient Causes* of the different *Phænomena* of Nature, wherein consists what is called *Physicks*, or natural Philosophy, was somewhat impertinent; being a Disquisition after a Knowledge, for the Attainment of which, we were not endowed with Faculties, that were by any means *adequate* to it. And that the Philosophers (to speak very vulgarly) had taken the *Sow by the wrong Ear*, when they would raise the Dignity of their Nature, and render it more excellent, by any Knowledge that could arise (if there could be any certain) from the Contemplation of the immediate efficient and material Causes of the various Phænomena of Nature in any of the four Elements. Since the utmost they could hope to arrive at in this Consideration, as of the Cause of *Thunder*, *Snow*, Difference of *Metals*, various *Winds*, &c. was only imperfect Guesses; which, how probable so ever they appeared, were still liable to be overturn'd, and rendred trifling by the Equivocalness of Effects, with respect to their Causes: And to aim at no higher Attainment, by the use of our Faculties, or

to satisfy one's self with this, I thought was unmanly, and absurd. Neither could it tend to procure a higher Conception of the *Origin* of all *Things*: Since the Excellency of the *Effect* included and expressed any Excellency of its immediate Cause; and the Excellency of Things around us, was to be judg'd by their outward Beauty, and Usefulness, and not by any unknown Texture of Parts, or hidden Machinery, whereby they *are* what they *appear*: For what was comprehended under their several Appearances, may be as well supposed to the Advantage and Honour of the great Cause of them, as if exactly known and pry'd into, were it possible for us to do it.

I thought then, and am still of a confirm'd Opinion, that the applying Effects to Causes, such as are obvious in Watermills, and Windmills, and in other more modern Discoveries, and Applications, were of great use and advantage to Mankind: But to search after Causes for Effects, was one of the most impertinent Uses a Man could put the Powers of his Understanding to. What are We, or what the Acuteness of  
our



our Spark of Intelligence, that we should pretend to discover the *Means* whereby the great FIRST CAUSE of all Things, either first form'd, or immediately produces and preserves the Order of Existence?

FOR these foreign and domestick Reasons (as I may call the Inability of my Tutor, and Indifference of my own Mind) I preserv'd to the end of my Course of Philosophy and afterwards, my catechetical Notions of a Heaven above the Stars, and of the ALMIGHTY's being immediately, and solely taken up with the Observation of our World; that the Stars were made on purpose to twinkle on us by Night, and the Sun to shine only on us by Day; and that they might all be plac'd at about an hundred Miles distance over our Heads; for I had the Faith to believe JACOB's Ladder reach'd at least so high.

THEREFORE, Sir, as I came to a Point, wherein I design'd to consider of *Existence*, and as my Thoughts were naturally to reflect, first, on *Capacity*, it may easily be imagin'd how surprizing it must appear

to me, when on *Enquiry*, I found instead of my Space of a hundred Miles high, Expansion was infinite, and instead of our Earth's being the only unsettled and temporary Part of Existence, there may be as certainly an infinite number of such *Orbs* (if Infinity can be said to contain Infinity) as we are certain there are *six* such in our Solar System; and which may *all* have as regular Motions around their respective Suns, as *each* of these have around ours. For this reason, I was naturally led to turn over two or three Systems of Astronomy, in order to enlarge my Notion of *Existence*; and thereby to make that considerable Step, which the knowing these Things is, to the better and more worthy Conception of the GREAT CAUSE of my own, and all other Beings Existence. And here my Unskilfulness in the Mathematicks (which, by an Unhappiness in my Education, I never had any Taste of) was of use to me, in that I made such more considerable Advances in my Progress, by my passing over the demonstrative Proofs of what was advanc'd by the Mathematician, as I should have been retarded, had I been able to have consider'd the

the Demonstrations themselves of every thing that I found advanced, in relation to the Distance, the Diameter, Density, Figure, and Motion of the Planets or Stars. And tho' my Knowledge thereon be only historical, not scientific; yet I imagine I have no reason to think myself imposed on, in the probable, and to a degree certain Accounts, Mathematicians give of their great and curious Discoveries in Nature: Since the greatest Mathematicians of all Countries assert it, and who from the Nature of the Thing, cannot be thought to have any Design to impose on us. Besides, as to Infinity of Expansion or Immensity, there wants only a free Reflection of one's own Mind, without pinning one's Faith intirely on these Gentlemen's Sleeves, to be assured that it is as certain, as that two and two make four. As likewise as to an eternal Succession in Things some where or other, of some Being or other. Which two Thoughts well pursued, will give that Man very different Views concerning himself, from what he had whilst his Thoughts dwelt in their primitive Confinement, within this little World.



BY this means I came to form quite different Notions of that great FIRST CAUSE; "whoever he is," or, "whatever he be;" to whom I am indebted for my Existence; and who was pleased to make me what I am, and to give me a Consciousness of my own Being, and a Knowledge of himself, in that Point of Duration and Immensity that it pleased him I should appear in and possess, of his own meer good pleasure, without my Knowledge or Consent.

I thought myself obliged to take a general View of my *three* abovemention'd *Particulars* of Enquiry, before I proceeded on the more serious Consideration of any of them. I have hinted *what* a general Reflection on the *two first* has occasion'd, and the *third*, "the *End* for which I was put in-  
"to Being," discloses itself more and more, as I look into *Existence* in general, and consider the Greatness of the arbitrary Power of the great Cause of *its* original Establishment, and harmonious Order, in which so much of it as we know, is placed, and consequently have reason to suppose

pose the rest to be in. No doubt, we *are* *what* before we were, that Great He was pleased we should be, and we shall be what he shall mediate or immediately think fit to make us. And I think we may very well be contented; since, as he never asked us our leave, "Whether we would be or no?" So neither will he ask our advice, "What the Consequence of our present Existence will be to us for the future?"

BUT as to the real *Existence* of such never-not-existing FIRST CAUSE, since so much depends on it (for otherwise all things must have been Eternal, or have sprung out of nothing) I beg leave to offer the *following Thought*.

" IF there be any certainty in our  
 " Knowledge of the Being of things with-  
 " out us, of the beautiful and harmonious  
 " Order wherein Existence in general is  
 " placed, or particularly in our Notions  
 " of the Splendor, Variety, Vastness of  
 " Number, Greatness, &c. of those illust-  
 " rious Bodies, which we see in a clear  
 " Night,

“ Night, and in our Ideas of the Reality  
 “ of an Immensity all around us, the re-  
 “ moteft *Corners* of which we may con-  
 “ ceive abounding with as glorious Pro-  
 “ ductions as that *part* of it, within the  
 “ reach of our Understanding, is acknow-  
 “ ledged to be inhabited with : If, I say,  
 “ there may be allowed any Certainty in  
 “ our Conceptions of these Matters, and  
 “ these things do actually correspond in  
 “ nature to the Ideas we have of them,—  
 “ That *Person*, who determines *against*  
 “ their deriving their Origin, their Order,  
 “ their Beauty, their Splendor, their Va-  
 “ riety, their Motion from ONE GREAT  
 “ CAUSE, whose essential Property, and  
 “ whose only it is *to Exist*, without ha-  
 “ ving enquired into, and examined, as  
 “ much as is possible for him, by the help  
 “ of his Faculties to do, what can be known  
 “ of them; *such a one*, I say; who, *without*  
 “ *having done this*, shall determine against  
 “ the Existence and Causality of a FIRST  
 “ CAUSE that gave Birth and Being to all  
 “ Things, makes a precipitate Judgment,  
 “ without having weighed the necessary  
 “ *Premises*, by means of which he was to  
 “ form it.

AND



“ AND had he made the best use of  
 “ his Faculties he could, in a Disquisition  
 “ into the Nature of every part, remote or  
 “ near, of Existence, that could come with-  
 “ in the reach of his Faculties, and had  
 “ made the greatest Impressions into the  
 “ Knowledge of their Nature, and of the  
 “ means whereby they are brought about,  
 “ he would not be yet entitled with any  
 “ colour of reason to draw any satisfacto-  
 “ ry Conclusion against the Existence of  
 “ one supreme Fountain and Cause of  
 “ Existence of all other Beings. For what-  
 “ ever may be his Sentiments, and in what-  
 “ ever manner he may think fit to reason  
 “ concerning the Causality of what he  
 “ sees and knows, either of their bare Ex-  
 “ istence, or Order, there must remain still  
 “ a possibility of their being otherways  
 “ produc’d ; there being multitudes of like  
 “ Effects which may be produced by dif-  
 “ ferent Causes. And till he shall demon-  
 “ strate the appearance of Nature cannot  
 “ be owing to any other than to that  
 “ blind Cause which he establishes, I shall

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“ pre-

“ presume with reason that it owes its  
 “ Origin to a First Principle.

“ B U T further, before a Man has any  
 “ right to determine against the Existence  
 “ of a first Cause or Principle, That must  
 “ be known that is impossible to be known,  
 “ That there is not actually existing in the  
 “ infinite *Continens* some more power-  
 “ ful and nobler Being than any of those,  
 “ of whose Existence he is certain, whom  
 “ if he knew, he himself would acknow-  
 “ ledge equal to so great and so stupendous  
 “ a Work. For who can say what is *lodg-*  
 “ *ed* in the great Abyss of Space, or which  
 “ way is our glance of Intelligence capable  
 “ of precluding with any colour of ground,  
 “ a first Principle from his right to Crea-  
 “ tion?”

“ S O that as we our selves gave not to  
 “ ourselves our Existence, but were caused,  
 “ we have reason to suppose all other  
 “ *parts* of *Existence*, (*except one indivi-*  
 “ *ded existing Essence*,) has been so too.  
 “ There appearing a perfect Independency  
 “ among them all, as to the voluntary giv-  
 “ ing

“ ing or communicating *Existence* to one  
 “ another; and consequently may be sup-  
 “ posed that they all owe their Origin to  
 “ *one common universal Cause*. It is im-  
 “ possible to dispute or contest the *possi-*  
 “ *bility* of this, with any superior reason,  
 “ by any one who has not an *adequate*  
 “ Knowledge of infinite Capacity, and of  
 “ those innumerable, or rather infinite *Ex-*  
 “ *istences* that are every where, and on all  
 “ sides, dispersed up and down, or are con-  
 “ tained in it.”

“ And if it be *impossible* to prove there  
 “ is no *first Cause* in Nature, it must ei-  
 “ ther be proved there *is one*, and that  
 “ all other *Beings* are dependent on it;  
 “ and receive all their Laws and Powers  
 “ from him ; Or it must remain probable  
 “ only that there is, or that there is not  
 “ such a one.”

THIS is only an occasional Reflection  
 that has occur'd to my Thoughts, as I  
 have rang'd them to and fro in the vast  
 Abyss of Capacity, and which I presume to  
 lay before you, SIR, in company with



the others. For my part, I think it no small Step towards the Belief and Assurance, "There is a God," to shew it to be impossible for any one to *prove*, "There is none." As you see, SIR, this Thought extends no further. And indeed, the Almighty Author of Nature, has pretty thickly shaded his own Existence and Nature, under the Shadow of his mighty and noble Works: Tho' virtually, I think, it sufficiently appears through them.

BUT being on this Subject, I can't but take occasion here to tell you, SIR, that to me it appears very surprizing, on the Supposition that all that exists owes its origin to *one first Cause, who never was not*, That there should be ever Beings conscious of their Existence, and endowed with Thought and Reflection, and yet be left ever in a Possibility of even doubting of the relation they lie under to that *first Cause*; and that we have not in some measure as clear and distinct an Object for our intellectual Faculties, when we direct our Thoughts towards *him*, as when we bow before an Image, we have for our corporeal Senses.

BUT

BUT to proceed. Nothing has ever occur'd to my Mind, so effectually to dispel those Mists wherewith it has been beset, as the Consideration, " of my having " an Existence, in opposition to my not " *being* at all." I don't know any Thought ever came into my Mind with more difficulty, or any one I could tell less what to do with, or to keep in view, than the Reflection, " That I was ;" and, " That Thought " which arises from the comparing my Existence with *never not being, or having never been.*" We are like a Man that runs his Course, and never thinks he treads on the Ground. It is a much greater wonder, that a Man has a Footing on the Ground, than, having it, he runs ; so is it a much more surprizing Matter, that we *exist at all*, than that we have Knowledge, or are capable of making different Pursuits in Life. In short, we come to take *Life and Being itself*, as soon as we have any Knowledge of it, as a *thing of course*, just in the same manner as we take *living on*, when entred on it, *to be*.

IF

IF it was possible (what, SIR, by the way; I am as sensible as another cannot be,) for one to have known before one was in being, what it was to *be*, what a Privilege should one not think it to come into Existence? Let any one now living reflect on any *past Period* of Time, as *Queen Elizabeth's*, or *Henry the 8th's* Reign; and consider the World *then*, and he himself *no part* of it; and join to this the Consideration of the World *now*, and himself a Part of it; and let him do this, if he can, without being surprized at the prodigious Alteration as to himself, which his Existence, and his coming to be a Part of Nature occasions. What a noble Creature am I, who, after an eternal past Duration, and Succession in Nature, which I past in Sleep, without so much as one Dream, as I can remember, am come on a sudden to *awake*, and to find myself in the midst of so immensely spacious, and so nobly adorn'd and illuminated an *Amphitheatre*? When will the Novelty, and Curiosity of the Sight be extinguished, or when my *Surprize* be at an end!

WHAT



WHAT an Effect would it not have of ennobling, and dignifying our Sentiments and Actions, did each of us consider ourselves as risen into *Being* in the midst of an infinite Expanse, crowded with such a *Shew* of great and magnificent Worlds, as our *Earth* is; and considered each Orb and its Confines, as stock'd with (what is highly probable) Millions of Millions of its proper Inhabitants, both of a visible and invisible Nature? How vastly different must such a Man's Thoughts be, of himself, and of all that is ordinarily valued and esteemed in Life, from those of one who never had considered *this Earth*, other than, as it were, the only transitory Being, and who was without an Idea of any created Greatness in Nature, but what was of *its* Growth? How impertinent and trifling must not the Pursuits, which the generality of all sorts of Mankind take up with, to such a one, appear?

THUS, SIR, am I fully resolved to make a *Pause* in Life, and settle my Thoughts on the *three* foremention'd *Heads*; and add to them a *fourth*, that naturally arises

arises from the other *three* Considerations; viz. "What I *ought* to BE?" and, to *plane* out to myself that *Method of Life*, which shall be most suitable to my *discovered Nature*. I intend to observe as I go along what Disputes there have been on foot in the World, and of which I am already sensible there are many, which it signifies nothing for one to be determin'd in; and which may be as great an abuse of our Understanding to attempt to determine, as it is to neglect the search after those things, which come naturally under its cognizance. I am resolved to fix myself so, both with respect to my Opinion of myself, and of all Things, either present or future without me, That come Death, come Life, come Riches, come Poverty, come Pleasure, come Pain, come Honour, come unmerited Reproach, come whatever Alteration of Circumstance of Life that can happen to such a *Being* as myself, to be found the *self-same Person* throughout the whole subsequent Course of my Life? Neither overfond of the one, nor afraid of the other; neither elated by this, nor depress'd with that; neither vain with Success, nor concern'd

cern'd at Disappointment; neither forgetful of myself in Prosperity, nor peevish or fretful in Adversity. And this, SIR, when one arrives at it, will be LIFE, and nothing less than this seems to me to be LIVING. For it is not a few airy ill-grounded Notions, with which we think we may do Wonders on occasion, and which may perhaps for a short time *soften* to us a Reverse of Condition, will serve the turn, will preserve to a Man a steady Soul, and secure to him *himself*, on all occasions. Nothing will be sufficient to do this, but *fixed Conclusions* and *Maxims* of *Life*, drawn from an impartial and serious Examination of what LIFE in all its Parts is, or what the true and real Estimate of all Things that we meet with in it. Indeed I cannot but be of opinion, that it must be of the greatest Consequence and Advantage for a Man to carry about with him a *Touchstone* of the real and true value of every thing he has to do with whilst he lives, how it really, and how in Imagination only affects him, to be of much greater consequence, than the having a *Standard* by him to judge of the Value of the Coin, or of any other



Commodity of this World. Since any single Deception in the former case, may prove of more Inconvenience and real Trouble, than an hundred any other way.

FOR *thus*, SIR, if I find on the *Touch*, That *Riches* are my *Good*, That there is no Enjoyment of Life without them, would I resolve to prosecute them with a suitable Ardour to what such a Consideration as that will naturally inspire one with ; that if the *general Esteem* of Mankind be a Blessing, to endeavour to secure it to me by all means possible ; if *Pain* be an *Evil*, to avoid it at any rate ; and if every thing be *good*, which is *pleasant*, to steer the course of my *Actions* accordingly.

BUT, if on the other hand, I should on Examination find, that my *true Happiness* is no ways dependent on an *Affluence* of what is call'd this *World's Goods* ; but that it is through an irregular Judgment, influenc'd by a wrong Fancy, that it is thought so ; that they afford no adequate Object for the Soul of Man to rest on, and to exercise a Complacency long in ; and that a  
true

true Enjoyment may be had at a much cheaper rate, and in a much more rational and sublime degree nearer home,—To be more cool, and indifferent in the Pursuit after them. What right use there is to be made of them, to make it ; whatever good account they may be turn'd to, to have regard to it, should they fall in my way ; satisfying myself, should they never be my Portion, that, that is never required of a Man to do, which he wants means to perform.

AND so, if on Reflection on the *Esteem* and *Honour* paid one, by those of the same Species among whom I may be conversant, it shall appear to be a thing no other ways valuable, than as either thro' the Rectitude and Probity of my own Mind I may deserve it, or as those who pay it me are truly excellent and worthy ; shall I be naturally led to moderate my Passions for the Caresses and Respect of your gaudy unthinking *Beings*, to regulate and proportion my Delight in it, to the real Merit and Worth of the Persons that give it me ; and not to measure this Worth and Ex-

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cellence

cellence by *embroider'd Habits, gilt Chariots, by Titles, Precedencys, or any mock Pageantry*; or in short, by *any thing established as a Distinction among Men*; but by that which is excellent and worthy *from Nature*; and what, wherever it is to be met with, though cloth'd in Rags, gives a Superiority where wanting, though in the highest Condition, I mean, *orderly Affections, generous Sentiments, and a commanding Reason.*

AND so, likewise, as to *Pleasure*; if on Examination, I shall find that every thing is not my *Good*, "that *pleases me*," That therefore a due Choice ought to be made, in order to make a *Good of a Pleasure*, or to come at any true Enjoyment—To be master of myself to such a purpose, as that I may never be indulging myself in that, which not only will give me no Satisfaction itself, but will rob me of that Indulgence which would give it me, and make me most content with my Being.

IF Debauch, Riot, Luxury, Sloth, or Voluptuousness, yield no lasting or constant



stant Satisfaction; and this be only to be had from the Indulgence of the benevolent and social Affections: in fine, if the mental Pleasures, infinitely transcend the sensual, to adjust my Taste, and regulate my Conduct accordingly.

IN short, if I find *Life* to consist in *Action*, if I find it to consist in the Exercise of those Powers both of Body and Mind, whereof I consist; and that these Powers are capable of being very differently employ'd; and that the Dignity or Indignity of my Nature will be as I shall direct the use of them—to find this right use out, and to pursue it—to form right Judgments of Things that will have any relation to me, and set proper Objects for my *Affections* and *Passions*, and indulge them after a proper manner. For *these* are the Principles and Springs of our Actions. And if I love only what is truly lovely, and hate what is truly hateful, my Actions will reflect by this means such a Lustre on my Mind, the Consciousness of which will give me that Complacency and Satisfaction in my Existence, which none can be sensible of, but those  
who

who on a settled Judgment have determin'd to live a Life suitable to the Dignity of their Nature.

AND now, SIR, by doing THIS, to what a pitch of real Excellency shall not one raise one's self? after what an advantageous manner shall not one recommend one's self to our GREAT CAUSE and *Author* of our Being, in employing those Powers, by which he was pleas'd at first to make one conscious of our Being, so much to the *Discovery* and *Perfection* of what it *was*? How advantageously will such a one, by this means, introduce himself into a future State of Being, who can give so good an Account of what he *was* in his prior State of Existence? and how pitiful and mean must that *Being* be thought, in such future State, who should be *landed* there perfectly unacquainted with what he *had been*? And who, instead of informing himself of the Grandeur there is in Nature, and of his own Relation to it by virtue of being a Part of it, had employ'd the whole Course of a *Period of Being*, in amusing himself with a Complacency in the trifling *Littlenesses* of Matters of human Institution?

LET

LET me have your Leave, SIR, *here*, while my Thoughts are warm, (and I hope yours are not, on your reading what I have writ, altogether cool, permit me, I say,) to lay before you here a *Supposal* of a pretty extraordinary nature, that offers itself to my Mind on this occasion; and which, however, I hope will not, at the bottom, appear more extravagant than rational to you.

LET us *suppose* then, “ That it should  
 “ please (HIM who only has, but who  
 “ actually has the power to do such a thing)  
 “ the *Sovereign* and *Sole Arbiter* of our  
 “ *Lives* and *Fortunes*, to draw out indif-  
 “ criminate a *Colony* from the *Bulk* of  
 “ *Mankind*, and translate them into some  
 “ other Orb in our Neighbourhood, where  
 “ there was room for such a new Sett of In-  
 “ habitants. It can’t be at all unreasonable  
 “ to suppose, “ That the original Dwellers  
 “ in such Region would be curious of know-  
 “ ing *whence these Foreigners came*, and  
 “ what *they had formerly been?*” But from  
 “ the general Inconsiderateness and Inatten-  
 “ tiveness of Mankind to their *real Nature*,  
 “ how



“ how few among this *adventitious Multi-*  
 “ *tude* can be rationally presumed to be able  
 “ to give them any Satisfaction in such an  
 “ Enquiry? The *First Troop* which they  
 “ shall accost, I will suppose, for the honour  
 “ of my Country, to be *Englishmen*; One of  
 “ which, I *hear*, asked, “ From whence he  
 “ came? Or what he *was*?” His answer  
 is, “ That he comes from his Place of  
 “ *Abode*, from *Family-Hall*, in such a  
 “ *County*; perhaps, indeed, he may know  
 “ of what *Kingdom*, and adds that too.”  
 “ And not that he comes from having  
 “ had a *Being* in such a *WORLD*, which tho’  
 “ he had liv’d a Revolution of 50 or 60 Years  
 “ in, perhaps, he had never heard of. And  
 “ as to the *second Demand*, “ *What he was*?”  
 “ He very readily thinks most notably to satis-  
 “ fy his Curiosity, by telling such *Enquirer*,  
 “ *As to what he was*?—That “ He was a  
 “ “*SQUIRE*.” *Another*, perhaps, answering  
 “ rightly to the *First Question*, “ That he  
 “ comes from an Orb, That was in his  
 “ Language, *called Earth*.” But, “ As to  
 “ *What he was*?”—“ That he was a  
 “ *LAWYER*?” That he dealt in *Qui*  
 “ *Tams*, *Seizins*, *Common Recoveries*, *Fines*,  
 “ *In-*

“ *Informations, Indictments, Ejectments,*  
 “ and (if it would not too particularly denote  
 “ my *Lawyer* to be one of the present Ge-  
 “ neration, I might add) in *Mandamus*’s and  
 “ in *Informations*, in the nature of a *Quo*  
 “ *Warranto*—But should the *curious Inquirer*  
 “ (who I will suppose, for once, to understand  
 “ what is said to him in such Language) pro-  
 “ ceed to ask, What real or personal Rights  
 “ were with them? Whence they arose?  
 “ What was the inward Constitution of  
 “ that Being, whose Safety was secured  
 “ only by a Community, and guarded by  
 “ Laws, &c?” — These are Things, which  
 “ for the Credit of our *Lawyer*, we will  
 “ suppose the *Enquirer* forgetting himself,  
 “ asked for in his own Language, which our  
 “ *Lawyer*, without prejudice to his *Charac-*  
 “ *ter*, may be supposed not to understand,  
 “ and so to make no *answer* to them. A *Third*,  
 “ to the *Question*, What he *was*, or had  
 “ *been*? Answers, somewhat sneakingly, —  
 “ a *Parson*.” A *Fourth*, to the same *Que-*  
 “ *stion*, very bouncingly, “ That he was —  
 “ a *LORD*.” This I believe to be no misrepre-  
 “ sentation of what would be the sort of  
 “ *Answers* to these *Questions*, on such an

" Occasion, by the generality of the *Eng-*  
 " *lishmen* which went to the Composition  
 " of the number of this new *Plantation*.  
 " And I see no reason, though I am not  
 " so proper a Judge of it, why any Thing  
 " better may be expected from the rest of  
 " the Inhabitants of the World. Few,  
 " very few, I am afraid, would be found,  
 " in the whole Mass of Mankind, into  
 " whose Heads it would enter, " That  
 " they had Been such a Being as MAN, and  
 " who on being ask'd, " Who or what they  
 " had been? could satisfy the *curious En-*  
 " *quirer* after such a *manner*, as on the like  
 " occasion would become a Being by na-  
 " ture conscious of his Existence, whate-  
 " ver it was.

HAVING here, SIR, made a reflex  
 View of what I have hitherto writ, and  
 observing the freedom with which I have  
 laid my Sentiments before you, I begin to  
 be in some pain, as to your Opinion of  
 my *Orthodoxy* and *Soundness in the Faith*.  
 I am not, however, apprehensive any Thing  
 has



has fallen from my Pen, any ways derogatory of the Excellency of the GREAT GOD, or, as he appears much more intelligible to me when I think of him, of the FIRST and *only* ORIGINAL BEING; or inconsistent with the sincerest, most entire, and most assured Dependance on him, or Regard to his *Will*, in whatever manner, made known to us. Indeed, it is astonishing to me, when I think on it, That there should have been such an *A-do* made in all Ages about *Religion*. What *Deformity* and *Confusion* has there not been introduc'd into the World under the Pretence of it? Under the Pretence and Colour of the most simple, and, one would think, the most intelligible Thing in Nature? What is *Religion*, or wherein does or can it consist, but in having a *due Reverence* for the *Cause* of our *Existence*, and, in obedience to his *Pleasure*, in *converting those Powers of Action* with which we find ourselves endowed, *towards the Happiness of ourselves*, and of *Those*, to whom the Exercise of them shall at any time *relate*? Is it possible, That any one can reflect on his own Existence, and find that he actually has a Be-

ing, and that without any concurrence of his own, but must necessarily have raised in him *noble Sentiments* of the *Author* of it? And these proportionably increased, as he increases his Knowledge of his own, and of other parts of Existence, that owe, in common with all things else, their Beings to the same *great Principle*? And as to the *other part*, there is, or surely there ought to be, to a generous Mind, so much *baseness* in building his own *Enjoyment* on another *like Creature's* immediate, or consequential *Misery*, that it is wonderful to me, how there should have ever been any occasion for the denouncing any positive *Threats* or *Punishments* to a Creature *capable of Reflection*, for *doing it*. What Consideration ought to carry so great *severity* in it with such a one, as the *intrinsic Meanness*, which the *doing so*, must imply in the *Doer*? How natural would not that *Thought* be to us *all*, if we would make the least use of our *reflective Powers*,  
 “ That that Action must certainly be most  
 “ consistent with our Happiness, which is  
 “ most suitable to the *Will* of the *great*  
 “ *Framer* of our Nature, and the contra-  
 “ ry.”

“ ry.” Did Men allow themselves to reflect on their own nature, or on the happy or miserable Influence, Conformity or Nonconformity to the *Laws peculiar* to the *Frame* of any Creature, must necessarily, sooner or later, be attended with to such Creature, They would all acknowledge the beauty and justness of this Sentiment, and readily subscribe to it : “ That in what-  
 “ ever point of Space, or period of Duration, a Creature, conscious of his Existence, should find himself in *Being*,  
 “ he had only to inform himself of his *MAKER’S Rule* of Action for him, to be  
 “ happy. And whatever appear’d to stand  
 “ in the Way of the Truth of it, when  
 “ practis’d, must be *Shadow* only, and not  
 “ *Reality*.”

BUT here is the Misfortune, “ Who  
 “ *thinks* or who *considers?*” *Those* that  
*would think* have immediately something, in every Country in the World, reach’d out to them, as, “ What they *ought* to think.” And *those* (which are by much the greater number) who have *no Inclination* to *think at all*, are ready to confirm themselves in  
 their



their wilful *Stupidity* under colour of it. These *latter* cannot be treated with too great a Contempt, nor the *former* with too much Indulgence. And every thing ought to be removed that prevents *them* from doing honour to their *Maker*, and to *themselves*, by enquiring into the Nature he has given them. Now what lies more in the way of this, than the respective Systems of Orthodoxy, which almost every Country has peculiar to it self? Were Men left to themselves, it is impossible almost to conceive that so great numbers would bear living a Course of *Life* over, without making some serious *Enquiry*, *who* they were, or what *it* was? Did we come into Life *with our Faculties in Perfection*, I am apt to think we should, before immersing our selves in Business or Pleasure, *look a little about us*, and be ready to ask our selves, “What it was we saw, and *what* we were  
 “our selves, to whom the Objects that  
 “surrounded us presented themselves?” Now I cannot see that the *gradual Manner*, in which we come to attain to the Perfection of our Reason, should be any hindrance to our asking our selves the *same*  
*Que-*

*Questions*, when we do attain unto it. Ought Novelty to strike us more than Magnificence? Surely there must be some external Impediments, that hinder our gratifying our Curiosity; and what more likely, to be of the number of these, than the Veneration with which we are bred up in, for the *fashionable System* of Notions of the Country, to which we belong! But what System of Orthodoxy is there in the World, that ought not to be a Shame to the *Espousers* of it, if it has not stood the Test of an *Examination*? Can it be reasonably expected, That the Examination of a *former* Age, can be an Examination for the *Present*; Or that of the *present*, for any *future* Generation, nay of any *one* Individual for *another*? What can be for the honour of God or *Man*, to be profess'd, but on being found, *on Enquiry*, to be *true*, by *those* who *profess* it? And what ought ever to be presum'd *true*, where that Enquiry is not freely allow'd? And how can that freedom be said to be allow'd any where, where a Man shall suffer in the least degree of Esteem, whose *private Conclusions*, however false in themselves, shall hap-

happen to be different from what is the *fashion*? The Magistrate, in every Civil Society, ought to *keep* a good *Look-out* on the *Outward-Man*; and the *Look-in* to the *inward-Man*, be only left to HIM who only *knows* him. No Government can (at least none ever did) subsist without the publick Acknowledgment of a God; no publick Acknowledgment can be made but under some *Form* or *other*; therefore of Necessity there must be a *State-Religion*, or rather a *State-form of Religion*, which the State of every Country ought to make suitable Provision for the Support of. And the Conscience of every Man, more obliges him, for Order's sake, to acquiesce under it, where no manifest Absurdity, injurious to God, stands in his way to hinder him from doing it; than it engages him, by reason of any slight deviation from what he in his private Opinion may think *more fit*, not to comply with it. This being settled, all Latitude ought to be given for reasoning on all Subjects indiscriminately. If Truth cannot maintain its Ground by Argument, God forbid it should have recourse to Authority for its support. And when



when this Latitude of the Use of Thought shall be indulg'd, People will be no longer sheltering themselves under Authority, for the maintenance of Truth, but will be forc'd to lay by their Idleness and Ignorance, and appear, and come out, and fight themselves. The Consequence of which, will certainly be a much greater Uniformity of Opinion, among those that will have any Opinion at all, than ever there was, while the greatest Restrictions, both of writing or speaking, were in force. There is too great a Conformity between the natural Understandings of Mankind, not generally to agree on fair Debate on Fundamentals, and there would be too much Greatness of Mind, when this is once done, to fall out afterwards about Trifles. 'Tis a fear for Interest that begets in any mind a horror for Argument. And there arises a natural Disdain in a *free Mind*, to be forc'd otherwise than by Argument to assent to any *Truth* that is propos'd to him. Were not this the Case on both sides, there would be no more heat in a religious Controversy, than in the Solution of a Geometrical Problem. Nor any apprehension

at all of the Consequence in any Dispute, or *what Truth* would turn out. *Truth* being the Thing we should all desire to be made appear, and readily and unanimously in all matters equally alike embrace, did not *Passion*, *Pride*, and *Interest* prevent the *Impartiality* of our Judgments.

THIS being, SIR, a main Reason that the Thinking part of Mankind, bring for their not thinking at all : I thought it not amiss to remove the Objection, as well as I could, that arises from it, as I went along. But though undoubtedly there is weight in it ; this Objection is no sufficient Excuse for the prevailing ignorance and inatentiveness in the minds of Men, concerning that which is so near them as *their own Natures*. An Enquiry of this sort, might be carried much further than it is, without any prejudice to or from *Orthodoxy* at all. But how easily are Men satisfy'd in so momentous a Concern ! According to the Observation I have made of Mankind, the generality of Men may be ranged into *three Classes*. One of which is made up of those who make no manner of use of their Understandings

standings but through the means of an affluence they have ready at their hands, follow and indulge themselves in whatever they fancy, without making the least reflection what does, or what does not, become them to *do*; as if the direction of Reason belong'd no more to them, than to Creatures who never were distinguish'd with it. *Another Class* consists of those who indeed make a right use of their Understanding, either by Contemplation or Action, and would thereby answer some End in Life; but this meerly for Ends of their own, for Honour or for Profit, and not in Consequence of any reflection on their own Natures, or any sense of Obligation to their respective Applications for the happiness of human Nature, from the particular Frame and Constitution of it. The *Third* and *last Class*, is of *those* (if there be enough left of mankind after the other two sorts are set apart to make up one) of both these last sorts, who from right and worthy Views, taken from the Observation of their own Natures, and in obedience to the discovered Pleasure of the Author of them, engaged themselves, as their Genius led them, either in Contemplation or Action.



BUT, methinks, at the same time, SIR, that I propos'd to lay before you, a *Plan* only, I seem to pretend to present you with a more finish'd Piece. But this is what I neither have design to do, nor think my self yet fitly qualify'd to undertake. The presenting you with That, may possibly be some future Trial of your Patience. I can only acquaint you *now* (to whom, next to my own Mind, would I approve my Actions). That I am resolv'd to make a *full Stop* in my *Carreer of Life*, and to bring to some Perfection the *Examination* I have already begun of *what it is*, before I live *it* over. To inform my self *what* it is to *be*, and what I ought to *do*, as a MAN, before I set about the informing my self what I ought to *know*, or *do*, as an ENGLISHMAN. And there are *two Things* I am resolv'd to satisfy my self in more particularly, not meerly in a speculative manner, but so to rivet, what I shall know of them, in my Mind, as that it shall be lively *express'd* throughout my future *Conduct*. One is, what I can discover of my *future Existence*, after this Life is at an End; *The other*,  
 what

what the *true Pleasure* and Enjoyment of *this Life* is, and wherein it consists. And, if I may judge of the Advantage of this *Enquiry*, when perfected, by the little Progress I have already made in it, whatever pains it will cost me, I shall never repent the Undertaking. For very great is the Serenity and Tranquillity with which I have already fill'd my Mind: Such a happy Entrance on any pursuit is enough to draw one on in it a good length, before one would think of a Retreat.

BUT you will perhaps, say, "That by  
 " the Pursuit of this your *Enquiry*, you  
 " will at length lose sight of that *Pro-*  
 " *fession* in which you are engaged, and  
 " what *then*? Or at least have a very con-  
 " stant Mind, such as I have no reason to  
 " imagine in your favour." — But to this  
 I beg leave to answer, " That I am irre-  
 " fragably convinc'd, That this is *the one*  
 " *Thing needfull*," That every *Employment*,  
*Honour*, *Distinction* or *Advantage*, that  
 is to be met with in the different Courses  
 of Living, is subordinate to it. I am satis-  
 fied nothing but this will secure to me an  
*easy*

*easy Mind*, without which, *Life*, in any Condition, is a very heavy Burthen. And I am no less assured, That he that has not done it, must have his present Enjoyment owing only to his Stupidity, or a constant Distraction of Business or Pleasure. These, in the end, he must either leave or they will leave him, and then what has he to support him? That rational Being who does not employ his Faculties towards the making himself *happy*, (and there is but *one way* of doing it) is unworthy of the Excellency of Nature whereof he partakes.

AT the same time, however, SIR, that I say this, I am not insensible that several Reflections, which you will find scatter'd up and down, in *this Paper*, are, when seriously espoused, enough to put one out of the ordinary way of thinking, and to give one an unhappy turn for Business and the World. But tho' it may be on very different Views and Motives that I shall re-enter on the Stage of the World, yet re-enter I shall. And after having consulted my own Happiness, endeavour to consult that of others. Which rightly understood,

is



is the proper End of all Employments; and ought, from the *King* to the *Cobler*, to possess the Mind of every one of every degree. Wherefore, altho' I am assur'd I could live very happily and contentedly in any obscure Corner of the Earth, retir'd from all the World, yet as I find my Nature active, and of all Employments I like, in many respects, that of the Law the best, I shall resume the Study of it; but to be impatient after Honours or Riches, I foresee I never shall. Alas! what is there in these that is any ways adequate to the Desires of a truly human Soul? A moderate Competency is all I desire or hope for, which I don't in the least doubt of procuring, in whatever State I was to be engaged.

BUT I can't think neither that a *Pause* in the *Study* of the *Law*, in my Years of Life, will be any Prejudice to any future Success therein. There is little done under 30, even where there is Ability, and I hope in 8 Years time, when I shall arrive at that Age, to have finish'd my *Enquiry*, and to have a little enquired into the *Law* too.

too. I hope, SIR, notwithstanding, with the continuance of your Favour and Encouragement, to arrive at the *Noon* of Life and Business, as soon as those who set out earlier in the Day. For as in the *Morning* of it they are content to *walk* leisurely, I hope (to continue the Allusion) my *Steed* will be so well season'd, when I mount him, that I shall be able to set out with a quicker Pace. And truly considering the little that is done in the *Morn* of *Life*, especially in the Profession of the *Law*, I have often wonder'd that Gentlemen are so zealous and hasty to be engaged in it. When they have *generally* little else before them, but a very reasonable Prospect of throwing or idling away 8 or 10 Years of the very best of their Lives: Years that might have been apply'd to much better purpose than in sauntering up and down to *Westminster*. These Years (if I may dictate, but it is *with submission*) ought to have been spent in close Study; and the former Years which they applyed to the Study of the Profession, have been taken up in the pursuit of what would have set off and grac'd the future Knowledge

ledge in the Profession. And when Business falls not in the way of one so instructed, it is a certain sign, that the Business was not made for him, or he not for the Business.

I am now, SIR, come to Town, for the sake of keeping my Term, and refreshing my Mind after so long a Retirement. When this is done, I shall return to it again, in order to pursue, and bring to a head, my Thoughts on *myself*, my *Origin*, and the *Judgment* I design to stand by, during Life, of *Mankind*, and of *human Affairs*; which I shall pursue with as much Diligence and Application, as the Hopes and Desires of not *undeserving*, at least, the continuance of your Favour, if not (through your Partiality to me) deserving it. And with as much Zeal and Assiduity, as the Consideration of the Importance of the *Enquiry* in general, and of the particular Importance of it to myself, by my reaping the advantage of setting out with such *mature and settled Determinations* concerning myself, and all that shall relate to me, in my Dawn of

H Life



Life, will undoubtedly be of to me. And next to the Satisfaction that a settled Determination, and a naturally consequent Resolution thereon will give me, I shall ever esteem the Continuance and Increase of your favourable Regards, SIR, the greatest of any Pleasure that can befall me from without.—Next to that *Pleasure* which that Person has transfus'd over his Mind, “Who has considered, and found  
 “ himself something in *Being*, without his  
 “ Will or Intention, endowed with Power  
 “ of exercising very various Actions; and  
 “ has, on Reflection, discovered to what  
 “ Actions those Powers ought to be determin'd. And who knows the Continuance of his *Being*, not to be in his  
 “ own Power; but to be dependent on a  
 “ Cause, which can as arbitrarily either  
 “ wholly deprive him of it, or as arbitrarily change it, as *He* at first granted  
 “ it to him.” And of the consequential Pleasure of which Consideration, I don't doubt, SIR, but you are very sensible.

BUT how happy shall I be, if from being not unworthy of your Favour, I  
 shall

shall ever become worthy of your Friendship! I confess it is bold what I am going to add, That I never reflect on the entire Friendship there was between CICERO and BRUTUS, without wishing, that what BRUTUS was to CICERO, I might come to be to you. I am sensible this lays me open to a heavy Censure of Vanity, if not of Ill Manners; but I hope it will on both accounts be softened, by what I beg leave to subjoin. If I compare myself to BRUTUS, either as to *natural Endowments*, or as to *Fortune*, it would argue my Ignorance, both of his *History*, and of *myself*. But as there was as great a Disparity between the *Age* of CICERO and *his*, as there is between *yours*, SIR, and *mine*, and some difference, tho', perhaps not so great, between them in Dignity; and as I am satisfied, that all the World knows *in whom* publick Spirit, general Benevolence, and Love for Mankind, Humanity, and all other those social Graces, which were so shining in CICERO's Character, *appear* with no less Lustre *in our Time*, than they did in *him*, in *his*; so I dare assert of myself, that there is nothing

so dear to me, as the rendering myself as *noble a Being* as I can : And as to the superior Excellence of Understanding, I know, that he that has a lesser Foundation to build on, may raise as regular a Structure, tho' not so magnificent a one, and thereby lay a Claim, in proportion, to as much Merit, as he who has a larger Ground, and nobler Materials to work on.

IF a passionate Desire of contributing all I can, to the Happiness and Welfare of those Persons, more or few, to which my Actions may have relation, be sufficient to make a Man *beloved*—I must be so. And if an equally passionate Desire to make one's self as worthy a *Being* as one can, will entitle any one to the Character of *wise* and *knowing*, I have a right to it. But as I am sensible this in neither Case is sufficient, but Endeavours must be used, as in the first, contemplating your Example will make those social Virtues be, at length, conspicuous in my Behaviour, and become a part of my Character ; I shall be glad to have your Direction, in order, on the other hand, to improve my Understanding,



derstanding, and enlarge my Mind: or if not your positive Direction, yet I beg the Continuance of your kind Regards. The Favour and Esteem of a Man of Vertue and Worth, deserving that to be said of it, with much more reason, in my opinion, that a great Author says of *Love*, " That " it gives a new Grace to our Manner, a " new Dignity of Life, and a new Visage " to our Persons." I had ever a Spark of Emulation in me, and a great Thirst after Knowledge. But I know not what it is become now. What was scarce sensible before, is now broke out into a mighty Flame, since I have been any ways regarded by you, SIR; and I shall never think I can do too much to approve myself to you, or to retain your Favour.

SIR, I shall end this *long* (and if you think *so*, you may add, for I would not anticipate your Judgment, *tedious*) *Epistle*, with the citing some few *Passages* I have met with in my reading, that greatly concurr'd to give me the *Cast* of Mind that  
has

has produced it ; and on which I must rely for my chiefest *Apology* with you, for having done it.

AND the *first* shall be, a short Citation out of an *anonymous Author* of a little Book, I accidentally met with, in these Words :

“ TO come but *once* into the World,  
 “ and *trifle* away our true Enjoyment of  
 “ it, and of *ourselves* in it, is lamentable  
 “ indeed. This *one Reflection* would yield  
 “ a *thinking* Person great Instruction.”

MY next shall be a *Sentiment* of the famous CARDAN, *viz.*

“ *QUID* jucundius *quam* *scire* *quid*  
 “ *simus, quid* fuerimus, *quid* erimus, *atque*  
 “ *cum his etiam Divina illa atque su-*  
 “ *prema post obitum, mundique Vicissi-*  
 “ *tudines ?*”

THE excellent *Monsieur* PASCHAL afforded me another *Incentive*, in the following Words ;

“ *L'HOMME*

“ L’HOMME est visiblement fait pour  
 “ penser ; c’est toute sa dignité, & tout  
 “ son merite. Tout son devoir est de pen-  
 “ ser comme il faut ; & l’ordre de la  
 “ pensée est de commencer par SOY, par son  
 “ AUTHEUR, & SA FIN. Cependant à  
 “ quoy pense-t-on dans le monde ? Ja-  
 “ mais à celà ; mais à se divertir, à de-  
 “ venir riche, à acquérir de la reputation,  
 “ à se faire Roy, sans penser à ce que  
 “ c’est que d’être Roy, & d’être homme.”

I crave your Patience, SIR, for subjoin-  
 ing to these *three* Authorities, a *fourth*,  
 that is above twice as long as they all.  
 And, I hope, I shall readily have it ; when  
 in excuse for it, I acquaint you, that in  
 my humble Opinion, it is the *finest Pas-*  
*sage* of the *finest Author* that ever writ.  
 It is of that great good Man TULLY, and  
 taken out of the *fifth* Book of his *Tus-*  
*culan Questions*.

“ — SED ne verbis solum adtinga-  
 “ mus ea, quae volumus ostendere ; pro-  
 “ ponenda quaedam quasi moventia sunt,  
 I quae



“ quae nos magis ad cognitionem intelle-  
 “ gentiamque convertant. Sumatur enim  
 “ nobis quidam praestans vir optimis ar-  
 “ tibus, isque animo parumper & cogita-  
 “ tione fingatur. Primum ingenio eximio  
 “ sit, necesse est; tardis enim mentibus  
 “ virtus non facile comitatur: deinde ad  
 “ investigandam veritatem studio incitato:  
 “ ex quo triplex ille animi foetus existet;  
 “ unus in cognitione rerum positus & in  
 “ explicatione naturae; alter in descrip-  
 “ tione expetendarum fugiendarumque re-  
 “ rum arteve, vivendi; tertius in judican-  
 “ do quid cuique rei sit consequens, quid  
 “ repugnans: in quo inest omnis cum sub-  
 “ tilitas differendi, tum veritas judican-  
 “ di. Quo tandem igitur GAUDIO adfici  
 “ necesse est sapientis animum, cum his  
 “ habitantem pernoctantemque curis? cum  
 “ totius mundi motus conversionesque per-  
 “ spexerit, sideraque viderit innumerabilia  
 “ caelo inhaerentia cum ejus ipsius motu  
 “ congruere certis infixis sedibus; septem  
 “ alia suos quaeque tenere cursus, multum  
 “ inter se aut altitudine aut humilitate  
 “ distantia, quorum vagi motus rata ta-  
 “ men & certa sui cursus spatia definiant.  
 Horum

“ Horum nimirum aspectus inpulit illos  
 “ veteres & admonuit, ut plura quaere-  
 “ rent. Inde est indagatio nata initiorum  
 “ & tamquam seminum, UNDE essent om-  
 “ nia orta, generata, concreta; quaeque cu-  
 “ jusque generis vel inanimi vel animan-  
 “ tis, vel muti vel loquentis ORIGO: quae  
 “ vita, quis interitus, quaeque ex alio in  
 “ aliud vicissitudo atque mutatio; unde  
 “ terra aequis librata ponderibus: quibus  
 “ cavernis maria sustineantur: qua omnia  
 “ delata gravitate medium mundi locum  
 “ semper expetant; qui est idem infimus  
 “ in rotundo. Haec tractanti animo, &  
 “ noctes & dies cogitanti, existit illa à deo  
 “ Delphis praecepta cognitio, ut ipsa se  
 “ mens agnoscat, conjunctamque cum di-  
 “ vina mente se sentiat: ex quo infatig-  
 “ bili gaudio conpletur: ipsa enim cogi-  
 “ tatio de vi & natura deorum, studium  
 “ incendit illius aeternitatis imitandae;  
 “ neque se in brevitae vitae conlocatum  
 “ putat, cum rerum causas alias ex aliis  
 “ aptas & necessitate nexas videt: qui-  
 “ bus ab aeterno tempore fluentibus in  
 “ aeternum ratio tamen mensque modera-  
 “ tur. Haec ille intuens atque suspiciens,

“ *vel potius omnis partis orasque circum-*  
 “ *spiciens, QUANTA rursus animi tranquil-*  
 “ *litate humana & citiora considerat?*  
 “ *hinc illa cognitio virtutis existit: efflo-*  
 “ *rescunt genera partesque virtutum: in-*  
 “ *venitur, quid sit quod natura spectet*  
 “ *extremum in bonis, quid in malis ul-*  
 “ *timum: quo referenda sint officia:*  
 “ *QUAE DEGENDAE AETATIS RATIO DI-*  
 “ *LIGENDA.*”

THIS is that *Knowledge*, with the Praises of which, the same great Man opens his first Book of the Nature of the Gods; and which has the Tendency, “ *ad*  
 “ *agnitionem animi & ad moderandam re-*  
 “ *ligionem.*” Two no inconsiderable Advantages.

AND to what ought another Expression of the same immortal Man be applied, rather than to the Subject of this Address; where he says, “ *Nil tam te-*  
 “ *merarium tamque indignum sapientis*  
 “ *gravitate atque constantia, quam aut*  
 “ *falsum sentire, aut, quod non satis ex-*  
 “ *ploratè*”



“ *ploratè perceptum sit & cognitum, sine*  
 “ *ulla dubitatione defendere?*”

IT is this *Knowledge*, and *it* alone,  
 that will *place* a Man in that *desirable*  
*Situation*, which LUCRETIUS gives such  
*Life* to, in the following Lines.—*That*  
*Station,*

“ *Despicere unde queam alios, passimque*  
 “ *videre*

“ *Errare, atque viam palantes quærere*  
 “ *vitæ,*

“ *Certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate*

“ *Noctes atque dies niti præstante labore,*

“ *Ad summos emergere opes, rerumque*  
 “ *potiri.*

“ O MISERAS HOMINUM MENTES!”

NEVER surely was Exclamation more  
 naturally rais'd.

IN fine, it is this *Knowledge* that will  
 alone help a Man in the *Conclusion* of his  
*Life*, to confirm, by his own Experience,  
 the Truth of that Trivial, but in the Sense  
 it carries in it, very Weighty Proverb

“That all is well that ends well.” And  
that will yield him that Prelibation of it,  
in giving him a *present right* to say with  
the Poet,

—“METUS OMNES & INEXORABILE

“FATUM

“*Subjeci pedibus, strepitumque Ache-*  
“*rontis avari.*”

I am, SIR,

Your most obedient, and  
most obliged humble Servant.

